567 his personal fortune. The management of any such property is left entirely to him. If the master becomes indebted [to the slave], he is required to pay the debt within a fixed time limit.

Emancipation from slavery. As was indicated in the foregoing paragraph, it was possible for a slave to amass property through his own efforts. He might then free himself by paying his master 100,000 cowries. He then might either return to his native village or settle in his master's village. There have been slaves who not only freed themselves in this way, but also became slave owners in their turn.

If, however, slaves marry female slaves given to them by their masters and become fathers of families, they do not usually leave their masters. [95] They acquire a certain standing and are counted as members of the family. It is understood that they do not have the right to dispose of their children since the latter are dogyiri (house slaves).

465 Various types of unpaid work. Aside from the labor and other obligations required of all Mossi subjects for their naba -- we have described the forced labor in a previous chapter -- it may be said that, in general, no work is required without pay, even from slaves. In an area that is predominantly agricultural there can be no question of payment in money as would be the case in private or official enterprises where contracts specify the obligations of an employer to his employees. On the purely native level, the employer is obligated only to feed the workers.

In sum, what are the duties of a Moaga?

1. Cultivation of the family fields.

2. Construction and repair of huts and roofs.

3. Private work: basketry, shoemaking, weaving cotton strips, pottery, sewing, etc.

592 The head of the household is required to feed the workers who cultivate the family plots or repair the huts. In a later chapter we 476 shall see that when the [96] members of a family could not complete a task without help, they called on other young men in the village. In that case, animals were slaughtered, dolo (millet beer) was brewed, and sagbo (millet mush) or benga (beans) was prepared.

567 On the other hand, it should be stated that when yemdago were used for hard labor, they were very well fed and were even given double rations.

342
412 Tools. The only tools used are the sitoiga (native pickaxe) and the wanka (hoe).

352 House furnishings. (a) The man's hut. The only furnishings in a man's hut are a mat or thin secco, a bolster made of cotton strips or kapok, a quiver, the club, some arrows, the bow, a large knife (zangoégo), and a spear. Small bags of charms and other amulets hang from the wall here and there, and there is a sort of oval straw basket, pilgou, in which clothing is stored.

(b) The woman's hut. From one end of the hut to the other there are billi, small pieces of wood fastened to the wall to hold gourds, bowls (lensé), earthenware basins (lassé), ladles (soutissi), etc.

In the rear of the room lumps of dried earth, [221] hollowed in the center, hold the vessels, and pots, dougdo, which serve both as storage bins for clothing and as granaries for the produce of the woman's own garden.

● 592 Plan of a compound. As one enters a compound, the huts to left are those of the women and the master's huts stand to the right. Completely outside the establishment, there are one or two straw huts, similar to those already described, which provide sleeping quarters for the dakompa (young men).

[595] The head of the establishment lives alone. It could hardly be otherwise, since he summons his wives in turn.

The women live with their young children or with girls betrothed to their husband, until, of course, these girls receive huts of their own.

343 Kitchen arrangements. It is exceedingly rare among the Mossi to find a hut used specifically for cooking. The wife's bedroom serves also as a kitchen.

592 Ordinarily the husband issues provisions to the wife who is
595 cooking for the family, but there are exceptions to this rule. At
252 Ouagadougou, for example, most of the wives provide the food for the husband. The latter furnishes provisions only during the winter when the fields are being worked.

[222] The wives take turns preparing the food. The woman on duty is aided by her co-wives in grinding the millet on the millstone (néré) of the section, but she alone prepares the millet cake, sagbo.

361 /10/ The appearance of the villages indicates that their inhabitants feel safe. There are none of those hut clusters bunched together in [171] narrow walled-in areas to withstand the invasions of an El-hadj-Omar or of a Samory, as in Bambara country; none of those family groupings of flat-roofed huts, those strongholds sheltering the whole family from the grandfather to the last of his grandchildren to resist through sheer numbers the incursions of a more powerful neighbor, as in Gourounsi [542] country where the authority of chiefs is so weak. Here every family head, that is, a man with his wives, his unmarried children, and his servants, occupies a certain number of huts that together form his yri, a grouping Europeans call by its Bambara name, soukala.

342 The huts are circular and usually built of mud, but sometimes of 333 stakes driven into the ground and surrounded with séko, a kind of mat of plaited broad straw. The huts are surmounted with a roof, likewise of straw, resting on a wooden framework. When a native wishes to build a hut, he sets a date with a mason expert in laying mud bricks and notifies the village people. On the appointed day everyone comes to him. The women fetch water from the stream; the men excavate the soil a few meters from where the hut is to be erected; the children trample the mortar and carry to the mason the clods prepared by the old men who sit gravely around the mud pile. This is a festive occasion for the village, because the man who builds must supply drink for all, and food as well if he wishes to do things properly.

A circle is traced on the ground to indicate the outline of the hut, and the mason places the mud clods obliquely side by side along the circle. When the first round is finished, he starts another, and he proceeds in this fashion to mid-height. The work is then interrupted until the following day to give the first part a chance to dry. This is why several huts are usually built at the same time. No opening is left in the wall. When it is dry, a door is cut through, usually arched and so low that one must creep on hands and knees in order to get in. Well-to-do women close their hut with a wooden [414] door that opens inward; it is equipped with a wooden latch that works by means of a large key made of a stick with small iron rods perpendicularly attached to it. The children and even the husband usually leave their clothing, their luxury items, and their cowries in these closed huts which are better protected against thieves. Those who cannot afford this luxury of a door drive two stakes into the ground, one on each side of the opening, and slip a mat between the stakes and the wall.

592 A typical soukala consists of the master's hut, a hut for each wife, one hut for the sheep and goats, another for the horse if he has one, a hut for the family mill, and, finally, a receiving hut with two doors sufficiently high to permit entrance without stooping and set sometimes as an entrance way and sometimes within the cluster of huts. All [351] these dwellings stand in a circle and are joined either by a cob wall or by /11/ mat fences taller than a man and held up by stakes. The master's hut, which usually stands beside the huts for the horses and sheep, is set off from the others by mats to insure his privacy. A low wall describes an arc within the inner courtyard; this is the kitchen when it is not raining. Big jars of fired clay which are used to brew [273 415] millet beer rest between the huts. In front of this cluster of huts, a shelter is built, usually high enough to permit standing and consisting basically of forked stakes with branches and séko resting upon them; this shelter serves as a refuge during the hot part of the day. Small boys and unmarried girls live with their mother, while older boys, servants, and slaves each have their separate huts which face the dwellings of the master and his wives.

The term yri or soukala covers this whole complex of structures. [591] Each soukala is a distinct unit, and, some time after they marry, the children build their own residence, set completely apart from that of their parents, often in another part of the village and sometimes in [361] another village altogether. The soukala stand fifteen to twenty meters apart, and, because of this, the villages, though adequately concentrated, cover a rather extensive area. The heads of cantons 392 place an ostrich egg at the peak of the roof on their own dwellings, [237] and some even build terraced huts higher than the surrounding dwell- [554] ings. They keep their riches in these huts and a prison in the base- [697] ment. An earthen stairway leads to the terrace where the master of [512] the house receives his guests when the sun begins to sink on the horizon.

721 These people, apparently so peaceful today, were formerly quite warlike and went off to war at the slightest pretext. Foreign to the land they now occupy, the Mossi must have conquered it by force of arms. The Tarik-es-Soudan /History of Sudan/ relates that the people of Yatenga seized Timbuktu in the fourteenth century, and in [721] the fifteenth they probably carried their incursions as far as Lake [701] Bébo and even Oualata. (4) The Mossi army was greatly feared.

4. Delafosse, op. cit., Vol. 2, p. 80.

428 When the head of a household dies, he leaves an inheritance of varying magnitude. No one touches it until the day of koure. As soon as the festivities are over, the eldest son summons the head of the family and all his uncles, brothers, and sisters. The partition of the property must be carried out. Theoretically, the whole inheritance, all the women, cattle, and cowries, belongs to the eldest son if he is married [429] or of marriageable age. If he is too young, one of the younger brothers of the deceased must act as his guardian, administer the property, and transfer it to his nephew when he comes of age. Of course, the uncle squanders his ward's property. If the deceased leaves no male heirs, the inheritance devolves to his eldest daughter. If he has no children, /76/ his younger brother, or if there is none, the son of his oldest brother, inherits the property. The oldest brother himself never inherits, except in the case of a naba; in such a case, if there is no other heir, the oldest brother comes into the fortune.

428 587 Although in theory the oldest son is the absolute master of all his father's property, in reality he must share part of it. If he has younger brothers of marriageable age, he gives them one of his father's wives. Every brother who inherits a wife must shave her head. If she refuses to have this done, it means that she does not want this new husband.

428 If the heir's brothers are too young, he gives them some livestock, cattle, sheep, goats. If the inheritance is sufficient to allow it, the uncles also get their share. No one may force the eldest son to share the property. He may state point blank that he intends to keep everything, but this will cause him difficulties and create enemies, especially if his father has squandered a nephew's fortune. Upon his uncle's death, a nephew defrauded of his father's property reminds his cousin of the matter and requests indemnities, which are usually granted in the form of wives or livestock.

428 592 The new heir becomes head of the household in his turn and often inhabits his father's soukala; sometimes he builds himself another one. He is now his own master, subject only to the family head, while his unmarried sisters and younger brothers come under his jurisdiction. He has inherited the property, but he has not inherited the power. If his father was a naba and he wishes to succeed him, he must now solicit the position from the higher naba who is empowered to grant it.

596 Such is the family life of the Mossi. To summarize: marked submission to nabas and family heads, marked freedom toward those who are not in a position of authority. The wives live side by side

their allegiance directly to the *Yatenga Naba* for historical reasons or because their chiefs are related to the royal lineage and superior within the social hierarchy to the local nobility (*nakomse*) to which the canton chiefs belong.

Subordinate, in turn, to the canton chief, is the village chief (*Tenga Naba*), who is the central authority in the aggregation of "quarters" (*sakse*) of which a Mossi village is composed. These quarters are the dwellings of patrilineal extended families and lineages (*boodoose*). Such a residence is called a *saka* if it contains the house of the lineage elder (*sak kasama*) or a *yiri* if it represents only a junior segment. In either case the dwelling of the oldest male in the group is surrounded by the separate houses of his wives, his younger brothers and their wives, and his sons, nephews, cousins, and their wives and children. Each adult individual has a separate house within the *saka*.

The smallest unit within the residence of the lineage is the nuclear family (*zaka*) composed of a man, his wife, and their children. If a man has more than one wife, the term *zaka pedere* (*zaka* half) may be used when the man's relationship with one of his several wives is being considered. He himself is called *zaka soba*. As a young man's family grows, each of his new wives is provided with a house adjoining his. In addition to his house and the houses of his wives, each man's household contains several granaries used to store the produce from the millet fields he has been assigned by his lineage. It is with the members of his own household that a man is in most frequent social and economic interaction. The fields he works with their assistance are the principal source of the food supply for the nuclear family unit.

The *yiri* is the next largest social unit within the *saka*. The term refers to the extended family dwelling inhabited by a man, his wives, his male children, and their wives and children. It may be composed of as many as fifteen separate nuclear families. While its inhabitants usually consist of the married sons of an older man and their nuclear families, it may also be composed of a man, his wife and children, and his younger brothers and their wives and children. Since its members are closely related within the lineage, there is greater social and economic interaction among them than there is with the other lineage members. As the *zaka soba* is the principal and final authority within the *zaka*, the *yiri soba* is most important within the *yiri*.

Composed of the nuclear and extended family dwellings of its members, the Mossi residential unit is typically inhabited by all of the local representatives of the sib. In addition to the dwelling of the lineage elder, it contains the altar (*kiemserogo*) where the ancestral spirits of the lineage are worshiped. The lineage elder has authority over everyone living within his *saka*. As counselor to the village chief and intermediary with

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
FA28 Mossi FA28

the ancestral spirits, he is the principal political and religious authority within his lineage.

The single term *boodoo* is used to refer to three separate groups: the sib, the lineage, and the local residential kin group described above. Aside from formalized recognition of patrilineal descent and inheritance, the lineage functions most significantly as a local residential kin group in which the economic and social participation of the female non-members is as important as that of the men. Although the men are most prominent in the direction of its affairs, their wives have a considerable, if somewhat indirect, effect upon decisions made. Even in the relationship of the members of the lineage to their ancestral spirits (*kiemse*), the women play an important part in preparing the food and the libations to be offered. They give birth to the members of the lineage, nourish them until weaning (usually at the age of two), and provide them with guidance and training for their ascribed roles. In the education of the female members of the lineage the wives play a more important part than the men. But it is in their economic activities that the significance of the women's role is best seen. In addition to their farm work, they co-operate fully in repairing roofs, flooring the courtyards, and even assisting in the brick-making which precedes house-building. The economic and social contribution of the wives is of equal importance with that of the husbands and sons, and it is more important than that of the daughters, since females born into the lineage marry and leave just as they become fully productive members of their fathers' households.

Daughters, however, serve their lineage in a different way. As they are successful in winning for themselves a good name in the households of their husbands, so the bond of economic and social co-operation established between the two lineages at the time of marriage is strengthened. When they mature, they return to assist the members of their lineage with ritual obligations to the ancestors. If they are left childless at their husband's death, they may return to their father's household to reside.

Separated from one another by millet fields and the public way, the dwelling of each Mossi kin group has the appearance of a small walled village. Each round mud house with its thatched roof has a separate courtyard which is usually contiguous to the courtyards of the other houses in the residential unit of which it is a part. The individual dwellings are constructed in such a way—the wall of each house or courtyard being contiguous to that of the nearest neighbor—as to form a circular wall whose exterior is closed at all but two points. The dwelling of each kin group has a small exit and a large open entrance way just within which is located a thatch-covered sun shelter (*zande*) where the men of the lineage gather to rest, to work at small crafts, and to talk. Guests are

5: Hammond E-5 (1954-1956) 1959
FA28 Mossi FA28

342 received, gossip exchanged, and social and ceremonial obligations dis-
592 cussed in its shade. Here, also, the men of the lineage take their meals,
[264] brought out to them from the kitchens of their wives and set before them by their sons, who first attend their fathers and then dine on what remains.

592 A few paces away is the grinding platform (*nere*) where the women
252 gather to prepare the grain for their families' meals. This great circular mud table, some twenty feet in diameter, is raised about three feet from the ground. Its surface is beaten hard and worked over with cinders and manure to make it rainproof. Each woman has her assigned place at this
[512] platform where she keeps her pestle and where she stations herself at dawn and again at dusk to grind her millet and learn the news of the day.

Frequently found at the outer perimeter of the dwelling of the Mossi
592 kin group is the house of the son of a lineage woman who has returned from his father's household to live in the benevolent presence of his mother's family, with whom he enjoys an especially permissive relationship. The house set aside for the residence of the young unmarried men of the lineage is also located on the outer edge of the compound dwelling.

555 A recent addition to the traditional pattern of village organization
184 described above is the independent households of socially ambitious individuals who have chosen to separate themselves from the residences of their lineages in order to profit from their own economic or religious enterprises. Many have become independently wealthy through successful commercial ventures; others, as a result of conversion to Islam, have gained prestige through religious authority and wealth through the tuition and services provided by the Koranic students. Often these people are much younger than their lineage elders, not in line for the inheritance of political or religious authority through traditional channels, and unwilling either to accept the authority of their seniors or to share economically with the less prosperous members of their lineages. They are deviants, in conflict with the communal patterns of consumption and with the emphasis on accepting established authority which characterizes the traditional social organization of the Mossi.

THE TRADITIONAL ECONOMY

613 Much agricultural endeavor is necessarily co-operative. Each farmer
476 is dependent on the assistance of his kinsmen to get his fields seeded,
243 cultivated, and harvested in the short time during which each of these operations must take place. However, the yield from his field remains his own, to be shared only with his own wives and children. Members of the lineage also work in the fields under the specific control of the lineage elder. Although the harvest from these fields is stored in the granary

1
242 [i.e. at A sun shelter in the entrance-way. — Analyst]

4. The iron rasp or sodara.
5. The sharpening tool or karé.
6. The iron wedge to cut copper (kétouga).
7. Shears to cut copper (mankasaga).
8. A few very primitive goatskin bellows.

As an example of a jeweler, may I present Sulémani Déréma, an inhabitant of Ouagadougou. He lives with his older brother, who is the head of the soukala and who has a wife and child. Sulémani himself has two wives and two children. A younger brother lives with them with his wife and child. Finally, there are other brothers in the soukala but they are not married (let us note in passing that this soukala is exceptional, for the general rule among the /518/ Mossi is for every household to live separately; here, although they still live together, every household works separately).

Sulémani Déréma buys his copper at market, or else he works the copper furnished by his customers to order. He makes bracelets, rings, copper stirrups, etc.

He also works in the fields during the winter season, and like the other households in the soukala, he does this on his own. Sulémani has two fields in the bush, one of small millet and another of large white millet, and in addition he grows maize around the soukala on the stretch of ground allotted him by the head of the soukala.

He owns neither large nor small livestock, not even chickens, He neither hunts nor fishes.

His jeweler's trade nets him more than his fields.

The blacksmith and niaka are representatives of metalworking. Let us now proceed to stonework.

The makers of crushing stones are called nanlora in Mossi, from nan, "crushing stone" and lora, "to shatter."

Our quarrymen look in the bush for large stone slabs resting on the ground, and whenever possible raised in some manner above it. They draw lines on these large flat stones with karité and soumbara, the size of the crushing stones they wish to extract, and then they gather wood under the slab and set it afire. They allow the fire

285 294 435 2. Similar but smaller hats, worth from 1,000 to 1,500 cowries.

/529/ 3. Round straw hats with wide brims, mentioned above. These are worth 1,700 cowries.

285 294 241 All the leather parts on those hats are added by the shoemaker. We have already mentioned that our hat makers are not exclusively manufacturers, that they also till the soil. It must be added that the latter activity nets them more than their trade. The man I mentioned cultivates a field of small millet and one of large red millet in the bush. He also grows maize, peanuts, and underground peas around his soukala. He owns neither large nor small livestock, but only chickens.

285 294 592 In his soukala he has two wives, four children, two married brothers who have one wife apiece but no children, and two unmarried brothers, as well as a father. They all make hats.

He lives at Saponé, where there are many hat manufacturers.

282 294 [564] After straw work, let us mention leatherwork.

Mossi shoemakers do not form a caste. Anyone who wants to may marry among them, and anyone who wishes to do so may exercise their trade.

[592] As an example, here is Kinoga Kologo, a Mossi, and the head of a soukala. He lives with two wives, two children, and an unmarried brother. His soukala consists of three huts.

His tools are as follows:

282 294 413 1. The pongo, a kind of broad little knife with a flaring blade hafted to a very short handle. It is used to cut hide.

2. The gansiouba, a wooden knife used to scrape and rub hides, clean them and smooth them.

3. The désara, a small tool with a wooden handle and a curved iron stem. It is used red hot to trace designs on hides.

4. The pime, a small awl used to sew hides.

5. The large tirisiga. This is an iron seal used to imprint hides with small circles.

6. The small tirisiga. This is a smaller seal, /530/ an iron rod whose tip makes a very tiny seal.

282 294 435 As among nearly all Blacks, the Mossi shoemaker is his own tanner. He buys sheepskins and goatskins at market (small ones

596 326 Are those blacksmiths who live in groups unaltered remnants of the ancient population as it existed prior to the Dagomba invasion? Are they autochthonous? Should their statement that they are not Mossi be interpreted in this light? This is probable, although by no means certain. In any case, the family among them is of the purest patriarchal cast.

596 326 592 Among them, all households belonging to a family occupy the same soukala. When a young man marries, he remains in the family soukala.

/543/ During the winter season, the occupants of the soukala work in the fields of the head of the soukala from six in the morning until three in the afternoon. From three o'clock on, they till their own little individual plots.

During the dry season, they all work together at the blacksmith's trade with the head of the soukala, and all profits devolve to the latter. They work from sunrise to sunset.

The head of the soukala provides them with food throughout the year. As for their clothing, they procure it themselves with the returns from their little plots. The same applies to bracelets, jewels, etc. (as for grigris, they do not like them).

The head of the soukala buys each man his first wife, and in return gives in marriage all the daughters of the soukala.

596 428 326 When the head of a soukala dies, it is his younger brother who takes command of the soukala. He also takes all the goods, fields, livestock, slaves, cowries, and the tools used to extract and work the iron. The sons get nothing. Everyone remains in the soukala.

When the supply of brothers has been exhausted, the oldest son in the whole soukala receives the inheritance.

If no males remain in the soukala, the sisters come first in line before the daughters if they have the same father and mother as the deceased, but after /them/ if they were born of the same father only. They take half of the movable property and give half to the daughters. They apportion their share evenly among themselves. The soukala and fields go to the village chief. If there are no sisters born of the same father and mother, the inheritance goes to the daughters, and next in line to the sisters born of the same father as the deceased. If there are neither sisters nor daughters, the whole estate goes to the village chief.

596
326 As we can see, the common patriarchal family is found among those blacksmiths who live in groups.

592
596 The second Mossi family type is one we had occasion to mention here and there in the section on work. Contrary to the first type, which is found only in a special section of the population, this one occurs throughout the Mossi but as a rare /544/ and exceptional case. All the households in the family still live together, but every household works for itself. This is the type we studied among the Nankana and other groups of cultivator-breeders under the name of Nankana type No. 3 /not translated/.

593
592 We come now to those Mossi family types which are widespread rather than exceptional. They correspond to the Nankana type No. 4 (every household lives separately and works separately), or rather they depart from it in the direction of even greater decommunalization. There are three variants, namely, one that corresponds to the pure Nankana type No. 4, and two where decommunalization is more accentuated. Let us describe them in turn.

Here is the first variant:

593
592
596 1. The households live separately. As soon as a young man marries, he settles on his own with the help of his family.

When a family head gives one of the family's sons a wife, he uses a vacant soukala if there is one available. If there is none, the son builds a new soukala with the help of his father and of the family head.

2. Every household works separately (except for the clearing of family fields), procures its own food, clothing, and subsistence. The married son, however, comes and helps his father a little now and then. During the dry season, for example, he helps him repair the soukala. Or else he offers him small gifts from time to time.

When someone, on marrying, settles separately, the head of the family usually gives him some family field that was once cleared and cultivated and has since lain fallow.

3. Although households work separately, the children of the households are not given in marriage by their father and mother, but by the head of the family. The latter buys wives for the boys,
[583] but he also gives the daughters in marriage and receives the bride price.

584 To arrange a marriage, one offers gifts to the girl's family on
596 festive days. The gift grows more sizable from year to year. Finally, at the time of marriage, one offers 25 or 30 francs as a bride price.

Girls are also exchanged among families. /545/ One family may pledge one of its daughters to another family for one of its young men, while the second family provides a girl for a boy of the first family.

Even if a man buys a wife at market and has children by her, it is not he but his family head who gives those children in marriage.

If a young man goes himself to a family head, asks for a wife, and obtains her without any payment, without any bride price, it is the girl's father who disposes of the first daughter born of the union. He is entitled to take her with him as soon as she is no longer at the breast, and he will later give her in marriage. The other children are given in marriage by their father's family head.

596 4. The head of the family performs religious sacrifices for the
782 whole family, and acts as its judge.

5. When a family head dies, the headship of the family goes
596 to his younger brother along with the family property, that is,
428 his soukala if it is a family one (built by the family or with the help of the family), the available family fields, the movable family property (livestock, slaves, cowries, clothing, family jewels, etc.). The movable private property of the deceased, on the other hand (livestock, slaves, cowries, clothing, private jewels, etc.) go to the oldest son along with the fields cultivated by the deceased and by his household, that is, the private property of the deceased. Finally, the soukala, if it was built by the deceased all by himself and without the aid of his family, goes to his oldest son as well since it is private property.

The brother who inherits gives some of the movable family property to the other brothers, but only if he feels like doing so.

Here, family property is by far the most important.

Such is the oldest variant of the Mossi family type that prevails at the present day. Actually, this variant still persists in quite a few Mossi localities.

Now, here is the second variant:

592 1. Every household lives separately, works separately (except
596 for the clearing of the family fields), and sees to its own subsistence.

592 People who are thus settled on their own work for themselves and no
596 longer for /546/ their father, with whom they lived and for whom they worked prior to marriage. They nevertheless offer gifts to their father from time to time.

592 2. As far as the marriage of children belonging to those house-
596 holds is concerned, a distinction must be made among the following
584 possibilities. When they are the children of wives bought by the family head, it is the latter who gives them in marriage. When they are the children of wives obtained by the husband himself, it is the latter who gives them in marriage.

Or else a rough compromise is made (in Boussouma province, for example). The first son and first daughter of the union are given in marriage by the family head, while the other children are given in marriage by the household.

596 3. It is the head of the family, however, who alone is entitled
782 to offer religious sacrifices for the whole family, and who always acts as its judge.

596 4. When the head of the family dies, the headship is trans-
428 mitted to his younger brother along with the family property. The private property of the deceased goes to all his sons, but the oldest son is favored. This actually constitutes the difference between this family type and the preceding one as far as inheritance is concerned. While in the preceding type the oldest son alone inherited, in this type all sons inherit but the eldest is heavily favored.

Thus, if the soukala was the private property of the deceased, it goes to the eldest son. If he is able to cultivate them all, the latter also keeps all the fields cultivated by the deceased. If he is not able to do so, he gives the surplus to his brothers.

As for livestock, if there are ten head that belonged privately to the deceased, and if there are three sons and two daughters, the oldest son will get four, each other son will get two, and each daughter will get one.

[567] As for slaves, if the situation is the same, the oldest son will take five out of ten, the second son three, the third son two, and the daughters will get none.

Cowries and grain are apportioned in the same manner.

In addition to these shares given to the younger sons and to the daughters, it must be noted that private property has acquired greater

593 and very probably of large and small livestock as well. In this
174 respect they must have been strikingly similar to the present-day Toucouleur, who conquered part of West Africa in the nineteenth century and who are, like the Foulah of Guinea, half stockbreeders, half cultivators. (We shall review briefly those very Toucouleur in Chapter 4 of this book, to give the reader an idea of the Black conqueror on the active rather than the potential level, in a "pure state" rather than already fused into a heterogeneous conquered population /not translated/). Now war with its attendant loot, like stockbreeding, augments private property and allows individuals and households to secede from the family, at least to the extent permitted by the problems of cultivation and especially of field clearing. It is a fact that among the Toucouleur and Foulah, as among the Dagomba and Mossi, every household lives separately and works separately (except for that most difficult of all tasks to the Blacks, the clearing of fields). Thus, it must be concluded that the decommunalization of the present-day Mossi family derives from the ancient workaday life of the conquering segment of the population, which imposed its own customs on the conquered group. This workaday life consisted half of stockbreeding, half of cultivation as among the present-day Toucouleur and Foulah, with war and looting in addition as among the same groups up to quite recently.

Of course, we learn nothing that might shed light on the subject by questioning the Mossi themselves. My informants, for example, tell me that the various soukala in a family actually constitute but one family. I ask them why, then, do they not live together and do all their tilling together, like /555/ the Bobo, Gourounsi, Bambara, etc.? Because the women quarrel, they tell me. Those quarrels caused other fights among the men, and people ended up living separately. Of course, this could only have been a pretext for secession, and the true cause which made this secession possible, namely, the increasing individual wealth of the households, was something else again.

592 We shall close with a few details concerning the internal structure of the Mossi household. The latter includes, as we have stated above, the following members:

592 1. Husband.
2. Wife or wives.
3. Unmarried children, sons or daughters.
4. Slaves.

Sometimes, it also includes young unmarried brothers (see above).

592 241 461 As a rule, every soukala-household has only one large bush field in addition to the garden plot surrounding the soukala (where maize and large red millet are grown during the rainy season, tobacco and cotton during the dry season).

The head of the household, his unmarried sons and unmarried brothers, work on those fields during the rainy season from six in the morning to three in the afternoon, with a long rest period around noon. The women work there also, but their hours are different owing to their household tasks.

The unmarried sons and brothers also have small individual plots of cotton and large red millet. They work them in the afternoon after three o'clock. During the rainy season, as a rule, there are no rest days. A few Mossi, however, have adopted the customs [527] of their Yarsé neighbors and rest on Friday. Others, who are Moslemized, and incidentally very few, rest both on Friday and on Monday.

During the dry season the members of the household repair hut roofs, go hunting, or else participate in the clearing of family fields, etc. In addition to this they work for themselves, as weavers for example. The money earned in this fashion goes to them and not to the soukala head.

592 /556/ It is the head of the soukala-household, the husband and father, who provides all occupants of the soukala with food throughout the year, morning and evening. He also provides clothing for those who cannot provide their own, but those who can do so procure it themselves.

592 584 464 565 We know that it is sometimes the head of the family and sometimes the head of the household who gives the children of the household in marriage. It sometimes happens, however, that a son leaves the soukala without his father's permission. He usually does this in order to win a wife, when the head of the family or the

592 584 464 565 father cannot procure one or delays too long in doing so. The son who secedes in this fashion goes to work for a chief or noble who will later give him a wife as a reward. The first male child and the first female child born of this union, however, will devolve to the chief or noble who gave the wife. He will use the male child as a servant, and the girl to be handed out as a reward to someone working for him. This is a side effect of the political organization on the family. This secession on the part of sons can only occur, indeed, thanks to the existence of chiefs and nobles in sufficient numbers to permit the secessionists to find work and employment among them without difficulty. Among the Bobo and Nounouma, such a situation could not exist.

Let us note that this institution, while restricting the authority of the family head or household head, has strengthened the power of the Mossi aristocracy.

592 361 In closing, let us note a few details about the Mossi soukala from a physical standpoint. It is a cluster of round huts, about five or six of them, usually built of red earth with a straw roof and connected to each other by a concave wall made likewise of red earth. The soukala is thus fortified, as it were, and sheltered from the outside.

592 361 171 The Mossi soukala is quite similar to the Malinké or Dialonké "compound" /literally, "square"/, which also consists of a cluster of clay huts with straw roofs. Among the Malinké and Dialonké, however, the huts are often connected by a palisade or a mere séko instead of a red earth wall as they are here. Another difference is /557/ that the doors of the huts of the Mossi soukala are so low that one must often creep in on all fours. Furthermore, there are no porches such as are found among the Malinké and Dialonké. In spite of those differences, however, the Mossi soukala bear a general resemblance to the Guinean soukala, while they are in no way related to the massive citadels of the Gourounsi and Kipirsi.

The Mossi soukala, on the other hand, are set about 50 meters apart. The maize plot surrounding the soukala lies directly around it, as among the Bobo, Gourounsi, Kipirsi, etc., while among the Malinké and Dialonké of Guinea the garden plot of each compound is located outside the village boundaries, since the compounds stand

592 only one or two meters apart, close together. It is true that there
361 is sometimes a small plot within the séko....
171 The soukala or compound is called iri in Mossi, the hut rogo or dogo, and the soukala head irisoba (from soba, "chief" and iri, "compound").

462 We shall close this analysis of the Mossi family with a few notes
562 on the status of women and that of slaves.

First of all, Mossi women help with the tilling. They do not clear the fields, it is true, but they participate in all other field tasks along with the men. They do this only in the morning, however, since they spend the afternoon on household tasks or on their little individual plots, for they have small fields of large white millet, underground peas, beans, or peanuts.

They also do household tasks: they pound and crush the grain. Large millet or sorghum is, as we know, pounded first and then crushed, while small millet is crushed after being threshed.

462 The Mossi set their crushing stones in huge round clay /banco/
252 tables which are built outside the soukala and which are used by
412 the whole quarter. This is a strictly Mossi characteristic which is not found among the /558/ Bobo, Gourounsi, etc., in short, among any of the other groups who nevertheless use the same stones. Those large round tables are not high. They are about 1 or 1.20 meters in height and approximately 6 meters in diameter, with a correspondingly large circumference. The Mossi set in their crushing stones all around the circumference, and each table can thus hold ten, twelve, or even more. Every evening at nightfall the women of the soukala which are around it, women, young girls, etc., come together to crush their grain. They are usually in the simplest of garb, bare as the back of my hand, for the work is hard and demands a continuous back-and-forth motion of the arms, the upper part of the body, and the body as a whole.

To make those tables, they first build a circular wall to the desired height of the table, and then the whole inner space is filled up with earth almost to the top. This earth is pounded thoroughly, and then well-tamped casings are fashioned on the horizontal circumference in which are set the stones on which the crushing is done. The stones are firmly ensheathed in the clay, which is then allowed to dry.

/223/ - BOOK IV

The Family

596 We shall divide this study of the family among the Mossi of Yatenga into several subdivisions.

1. Generalities on the family.
2. Groupings larger than the single household.
3. Women and the household.
4. Children and education.
5. Apendages of the family.
6. Family property.
7. Transmission of family property or inheritance.

First, let us look at the generalities which include in turn the following subdivisions.

1. The composition of the family.
2. Its name.
3. Its nature.
4. Examples.

The Mossi family of Yatenga is one of several layers, if I can thus describe it. First, one may consider the total family, the family in its fullest extension, which usually includes from 100 to 150 persons and several separate compounds. The compounds themselves usually [592] include several households. Each compound does not form a tight economic entity, as many other Sudanese compounds do. On the [571] contrary, it is divided into two or more work groups according to its numerical size. Finally, below the work group there is the single household (father, mother or mothers, and unmarried children). We shall examine these groupings one by one.

Name. —The family in its fullest extension, the total family, is called boudou in Yatenga Mossi. The compound is called zaka. The word iri, used especially by the Mossi of Ouagadougou, is also employed, while the word zaka is used chiefly in Yatenga. Finally, [571] there is no word to designate the household, nor is there a word to designate the work group. One says: "the people of So-and-So (the name of the head of the group)." /224/

Nature of the family. —In the first place, the family is communal up to a certain point. The whole family does not work together nor

596 even the compound. As a rule, the work group is not composed of a single household but of two or more. We are dealing here, therefore, with a highly disintegrated communal family. Let us state immediately that the family among the Foulsé /Fulse/ and Yarsé /Yarse/, which we shall describe later /not translated/, is less disintegrated than the Mossi family, while the Samo family is even less so than the Foulsé and Yarsé families.

611 As far as matriarchy and patriarchy are concerned, the Mossi family of Yatenga is patriarchal, that is to say, the family revolves around the man rather than the woman. This is a clearly documented fact. There are, however, some indications, as we shall see, that permit us to inquire whether once upon a time, very long ago, the Mossi family was not matriarchal. In our Noir du Soudan /The Black Population of the Sudan/ we pointed out various indications of the same sort about the Gourounsi /Grunshi/.

In sum, the Mossi family of Yatenga is (1) communal and quite disintegrated and (2) patriarchal.

592 596 162 Examples. —Let us first list some statistical figures. Here is a table summarizing some important censuses taken among the Mossi of Yatenga.

Localities	Families	Compounds	Number of Persons
Diogoré and Lako (small cantons)	25	78	3, 165
Small canton of Tangay	11	51	1, 241
Village of Dio	7	50	842
Totals	43	179	5, 248

This set of figures yields an average of 122 persons per family, four compounds or iri or zaka per family, and 29 persons per compound.

Now for some details.

In the village of Tangay (canton of Tangay) there are 11 Mossi families. Here are the figures for the persons who compose them and the compounds where they live.

592
596
162

Families	Compounds	Number of Persons
1st family	1	51
2nd family	6	132
3rd family	2	23
4th family	6	160
5th family	3	59
6th family	5	50
/225/ 7th family	9	136
8th family	3	79
9th family	8	242
10th family	4	158
11th family	4	151
	51	1, 241

592
596
162
624

This gives us an average of 113 persons per family, 5 compounds per family, and 24 persons per compound.

Now, here are the villages in the little canton of Lako or Lago.

Villages	Families	Compounds	Number of Persons
Bô	2	3	89
Boulounsi	1	3	137
Ninga	2	12	146
Piga-Sorodé	1	2	35
Réga	4	17	484
Viré-Sorodé	3	4	242
Diogoré	1	8	352
Lako	7	25	1, 457
Touba	3	3	216
Nango-Yarsé (Mossi of the village)	1	1	7
Totals	25	78	3, 165

592
596
162
621

This gives us an average of 126 or 127 persons per family, 3 compounds per family, and 40 or 41 people per compound.

Now, here are some other statistics.

Villages	Families	Compounds	Households	Number of Persons
Lougouri	2	4	48	157
Oula	2	5	43	149
Réka	1	2	3	46
Noungou	2	14	46	233
Zirè	1	3	36	197
Kindiba	7	35	149	736
Diessiré	5	15	49	286
Bissigaï	4	17	100	510
Bougounam	8	32	151	999
Totals	32	127	625	3, 313

/226/ On an average, this gives us 103 or 104 persons per family, 26 persons per compound, 5 persons per household, 4 compounds or soukala per family.

Here are some statistics collected in the canton of Koussouka and covering those villages which are entirely Mossi as well as those which are predominantly Mossi.

Villages	Families	Compounds	Households	Population
Rondo	7	72	148	975
Bouga-Mossi	1	11	23	152
Sékéba	1	9	28	183
Zandoma	3	24	62	344
Tangué	7	26	67	439
Konga-Mossi	3	23	72	483
Iroum	2	63	159	880
Totals	24	228	559	3, 456

592 Here we get an average of 144 persons per family, 15 persons per
596 compound, and 6 persons per household. This gives 2 or 3 households
162 per compound and 9 to 10 compounds per family.
261 Finally, here are some figures obtained among the Mossi in the northern part of the /Ouahigouya/ circle /a circle is an administrative district/.

Villages	Compounds	Persons	Average per Compound	Observations
Boulzoma	1	39 (1)	39	(1) 7 households
Aoréma	50	672	13	
Bogoya	29	379 (2)	13	(2) 64 households
Yabonsoro	37	494 (3)	13	(3) 74 households
Bagayaloro	14	290	21	
Barélogo	17	317	19	
Lilligondé	12	177	15	
Rikou	33	486	15	
Dinghiri	59	725	12	
Dinghila	44	362	8	
Irigué	17	94	6	
Bahn (Mossi)	3	54	18	
Pogoro	38	334	8	
Ninighé	7	75	11	
Séghé	8	111	14	
Tibo	19	228	12	
Totals	388	4, 837	12 to 13	

Here we have only 12 or 13 persons per compound (and 6 per household). This shows an evolution of the Mossi family of Yatenga toward /227/ a more disintegrated form, which we shall discuss later when we mention the exceptions.

If we summarize the preceding statistics, we obtain the following table.

592
596
162
261

Locations	Families	Compounds	Persons
Diogoré, etc.	43	179	5, 248
Oula, etc.	32	127	3, 313
Koussouka	24	228	3, 456
Northern part	?	369	4, 609
	?	903	16, 626

This gives us on an average 18 to 19 persons per compound and 121 persons per family (1).

1. This figure of 18 to 19 persons is an average one. Actually, there are some Mossi compounds which contain only 3 persons and others which boast as many as 100. To give a better idea of the matter, I shall provide below a numerical breakdown of the village of Diessiré (canton of Léba) where there are 286 persons and 15 compounds, or an average of 19 persons per compound. In reality, no one compound holds exactly 19 people.

Compounds	Households	Persons
First compound	4	24
Second compound	3	18
Third compound	1	6
Fourth compound	2	11
Fifth compound	4	23
Sixth compound	3	17
Seventh compound	1	5
Eighth compound	2	12
Ninth compound	2	12
Tenth compound	1	6
Eleventh compound	2	12
Twelfth compound	14	81
Thirteenth compound	3	18

Fourteenth compound	6	36
Fifteenth compound	1	5
	49	286

This gives us, therefore:

Compounds with several households (more than two)	7
Compounds with several households (two)	4
Compounds with a single household	4
	15

Now that these statistics have been listed, let us examine in detail the groupings larger than the single household, which may be categorized as follows: (1) the total family; (2) the compound; (3) the work group.

The total family. —As we stated earlier, the total family /228/ does not occupy one and the same compound. It is divided into a number of zaka or iri of varying size (the average number given by the above statistics is five). One of these compounds is that of the boudoukasaman or head of the family, who governs the whole family and is at the same time the head of his own zaka and head of his work group. As head of the family, he holds definitively only three types of powers: (1) religious powers; (2) judicial powers; (3) the right to give the daughters of the whole family in marriage.

As head of the family, he has no economic powers.

We shall study the religious powers of the boudoukasaman in detail under "Religion (Sacerdotal Organization)" /not translated/. Let us simply state here that although the head of the total family holds the highest religious powers, the zakasoba or heads of compounds are not totally deprived of them, and this contributes to the greater autonomy of these subfamilies.

I am borrowing the following particulars on the family head and the family council which assists him from Vadier's excellent monograph, here and there correcting some inexact details.

"The head of the family, or patriarch, " says Vadier, "is the oldest member of the family. It is he who is the head of it.

"He enjoys great authority over all family members, but exclusively in regard to personal matters. To him alone, after obtaining the consent of the fathers, belongs the right to give the young girls of the

596 family in marriage. Likewise, the head of the family, assisted by the family council, settles all the little differences which arise between relatives. He also intervenes when a father fails to secure the obedience of one of his children or cannot manage to discipline him.

"It is he alone who must sacrifice animals for the benefit of the whole family when his relatives bring them to him on the occasion of family feasts.

"All the members of the family owe obedience to the family head. Likewise, they must show him the greatest respect.

"When the family elder dies, his younger brother becomes head of the family. When all his brothers have successively held this office, the eldest son of the eldest brother becomes the family head after the brothers, etc.

"Sometimes the head of the family does not live in the same village as the rest of the family. He may very well live with some of his sons or brothers, away from his other relatives, but his powers remain unchanged.

"In addition to the family head, there is the family council which is made up of all the men and old women of the family. This body has no well-defined role. It meets under the leadership of the family head to settle all matters concerning the family. The council would decide, for example, as to whether an incorrigible child should be sent to a naba /ruler/, as to who should intervene /229/ in case of a quarrel over an inheritance, who should seize the goods of a spendthrift in order to dole them out to him in proportion to his needs, etc."

592 351 The compound. —The Mossi compound consists of a certain number of round earthen huts or cabins surmounted by thatched roofs and huts for millet, all crowded into a rather narrow space cut by passages, hallways, small courtyards, etc. This complex is surrounded by a moderately high earth wall (two meters) which encircles the huts or cabins and encloses the compound.

592 361 The compounds are scattered over the plain, 50 or 100 meters apart. Some are larger than others: some have 15 or 20 huts or even more; others have but four or five (2).

192 2. To designate these compounds, the word soukala or sokala is often used. This word is hallowed by custom in Yatenga, in the Ouagadougou area, in the Léo area, etc., in short, in all Mossi lands and their

192 dependencies, as well as in the language of the European officials who inhabit the territory. Actually, the word sokala is not Mossi but Mandé /Mande/. In Bambara the hut is called so, in Malinké /Malinke/ sou. Soukala or sokala means exactly "the walls of the hut" (from kala, which means "bone" and by extension all elongated things, walls among them, and from so or sou, whose meaning we have learned already). This word was brought here from the shores of the Niger at the time of conquest. It is to some extent equivocal, for although it is usually given the meaning of "compound," some Europeans also use it to designate a whole quarter /a village subdivision including several compounds/. This is the meaning given to it by Delafosse (Le Haut-Sénégal-Niger /Upper Senegal-Niger/, Vol. 3, p. 126). As for myself, I always gave it the meaning of "compound" in my Noir du Soudan, that is to say, the meaning which I gave to the term carré or carrée in my monograph on the Noir de Guinée /The Black Population of (French) Guinea/. This word, however, and analogous words which are not strictly native to the region or whose French meaning is not absolutely clear lead to some confusion. We shall return to this subject later.

592 Let us add that the head of the compound is called zakasoba or irisoba (from zaka or iri, "compound," and soba, "chief, master"). Vadier incorrectly designated the head of the total family as zakasoba [596] in his monograph. The head of the total family is the boudoukasaman. The zakasoba is the head of a compound, of a home, of that cluster of huts and millet granaries encircled by a red wall which makes such a distinct and isolated unit on the Mossi plains.

This compound accommodates varying numbers of people, 18 or 19 being the average (with exceptions), as we have seen above.

592 The compound, from an intellectual point of view, is a kind of subfamily. It is not the whole family; it is not the equivalent of the total family. It is, however, quite superior to the single household.

592 182 571 If the Mossi family of Yatenga were completely communal and perfectly integrated, the 100 or 125 persons or so who make up a Mossi family would live and work together. A less marked but still quite appreciable degree of community would exist if the compound were a tight economic unit (this does occur among many blacks of the /French/ Sudan, especially among the Bobo /230/ of the Residency of Léo, the Menkiéra, the Nounouma /Nunuma/, the Kassonfra /Awuna/, etc., and also among the Samo of Yatenga as we shall see later), with all the people who live in it working and consuming together under the authority and guidance of the head of the home. Actually, there is even more disintegration of the family among our Mossi of Yatenga. In each home there are work groups which vary in number according to the importance of the compound and the number of its occupants.

592 571 241 Work groups. —We must proceed to the work group, then, in order to deal with the actual economic unit. This group has the communal fields which are not, therefore, properly speaking, familial fields or even subfamilial fields. They belong to a subordinate unit. It is the head of the work group who supplies food for all the people in his group during the greater part of the year (seven months out of twelve). In return, they owe him the larger part of their time during the rainy season (two days out of three) but little work during the dry season. Each member of the group also has his own little field which he cultivates on the third day, as we shall see later on.

592 264 Consumption. Meals. —People do not assemble for meals in the same fashion during the rainy season as during the dry season.

During the rainy season the members of each work group eat together at noon in the fields, but men and women are always apart. The boys eat with the men, the girls and small children with the women. In the evening they gather for meals in the same manner as during the dry season.

During the dry season the members of each compound, the whole zaka, eat together, but they are divided into several groups. First, there is the basic division between men and women. Then, if the compound is a large one, there are on the male side the groupings of old men, married men, and young unmarried men. There are also three groups on the female side: old women, married women,

592 and young girls. Thus, there are six groups altogether, but we must
264 add that when the women do not get along well, each one eats in her own hut with her own children. In the smaller compounds, there cannot be six groups; there are only two basic ones, that of the men and that of the women.

592 For the preparation of food during the seven months when millet
252 furnished by the head of the work group is eaten, or in other words the millet from the communal fields (roughly from April to October), each woman is "on duty" for 24 hours and cooks for the whole group. The other women help her, of course, by fetching water, pounding millet for her, etc. During the five months when the millet from the small private fields is eaten (November-March), each woman prepares her husband's food. When a husband has several wives, they take turns preparing the food.

592 /231/ As we can see, the manner of preparing meals follows the
252 schedule of millet consumption. While the communal grain distributed
264 by the head of the work group or under his supervision is being consumed, cooking is done on a work group basis. During the time when the millet from household fields is being consumed, the preparation of meals is on a household basis. The actual consumption of the meals, however (except when people are working in the fields) involves a larger community, that of the compound. There remains, however, the basic division between men and women, who must not eat together and who always split into two groups at mealtime. In the larger compounds, moreover, each of these two major groups is further divided into subgroups according to natural age lines. Finally, to cap it all, the female spirit of anarchy sometimes causes some of the women to withdraw. Hence, for the consumption and preparation of food as well as for its production, there exists only this very unstable community which is characteristic of the family we are studying.

592 Exceptions. —We come now to the Mossi household, which we
182 shall discuss at some length. Before doing so, however, it must be stated that the family as we have just described it has its exceptions here and there.

First, there are exceptions in the sense of community, in the sense of integration; above all, there are exceptions in the sense of greater disintegration.

596 In the sense of integration, we must mention primarily the families
592 of great chiefs. For example, there is the family of Gombiraogo, a
182 former Baloum Naba, a very wealthy and important personage. He
591 has five brothers. Two of them live together in the village of Kalo and another two, similarly, in the village of Bembéla. Gombiraogo lives in Ouahigouya with the fifth brother. With this brother he has three zaka where 70 or 80 people live, all of whom work for him and form a single work group under his direction (that is to say, during the rainy season they work for him two days out of three, and during the dry season they do so only when he has exceptional need of them; in return, he provides them with food seven months out of twelve, according to custom, and does not provide them with clothes unless they are unmarried).

What should be noted here is the strength of this work group (70 to 80 people). As a result, it includes several compounds, while it is the compound as a rule that contains several or at least two work groups.

[645] The present Baloum Naba, the prime minister, likewise has two zaka working for him. Moreover, the total family of the Baloum Naba is not assembled in Ouahigouya but scattered throughout Yatenga.

[643] In the same connection, the Rassam Naba has a zaka of 157 people who form a single work group under his direction. In return, he provides them with food all year.

294 /232/ Again, there is a zaka of shoemakers at Ouahigouya which
592 includes nearly 100 people altogether, among them 15 or 20 full-
182 grown men, all of them shoemakers. They all work for the zakasoba, who provides them all with food. This zaka, of exceptional numerical strength, is at the same time completely integrated.

596 At the other end of the scale, we find the Mossi family of Yatenga
182 evolving toward complete disintegration in certain parts of the terri-
592 tory, that is to say, evolving toward a state of affairs where nothing remains except the total family on the one hand and the single household on the other (that is, the compound has only a single household).

Thus, in the course of a journey through the canton of Ratenga, I noted in the village of Tangué a family of 110 persons distributed among 14 homes. This gives an average of only seven or eight persons per home. In Kargo (another village) there are five Mossi families for 22 homes sheltering 181 persons, or only eight persons per home.

596 182 592 Here the zaka is quite clearly reduced to the single household, which becomes identified at the same time with the compound and with the work group. Let us state, however, that in the whole of Ratenga there are 4, 637 Mossi for 458 compounds, or ten persons per compound. An average of ten people per compound represents slightly more than a single household (which averages six persons in Yatenga), but not as much as two households. This means that the compounds sometimes contain two households, sometimes only one. Thus, since there are only a few people in each zaka, there is but a single work group.

162 592 621 Here is a complete numerical breakdown of the canton of Ratenga.

Villages	Inhabitants	Compounds	Average per Compound
Napalra	254	20	13
Ouembatenga	61	5	12
Alaga	335	22	15
Boulounga	197	23	9
Bani	387	30	13
Singuitenga	248	18	14
Boudé	69	11	6
Foulgo-Koquin	22	5	4
Zomkalga	88	12	7
Momoné	86	10	9
Toïsi	100	13	8
Denian	4	1	4
Pinsi	145	13	11
Dologa	110	15	7
Kiédéwendé	103	10	10
/233/ Koundi-Bittou	63	9	7
Yalka	56	4	14
Koumbango	221	19	12
Kourpellé	167	15	11
Zimtenga	307	39	8
Battenga	94	11	9
Badnoro	83	10	8
Douré	96	6	16
Yalgatenga	45	8	6

Villages	Inhabitants	Compounds	Average per Compound
Bargo	77	8	10
Lo	127	14	9
Rakoéga-Tenga	33	4	8
Moro-Koquin	37	7	5
Dougouré	41	7	6
Bama	82	7	12
Kora	99	9	11
Tangué	110	14	8
Minima	113	12	9
Kanion	75	10	7
Toukoulounga	124	4	31
Tempelra	35	6	6
Bauda	162	5	32
Kargo-Mossi	181	22	8
	4, 637	458	10

The same applies to the Mossi of the canton of Tougo, located south-southeast of Yatenga. Here are the figures concerning the number of compounds and the number of people in the canton.

Villages	Compounds	Persons	Average per Compound
Tibtenga	9	102	11
Béma	96	792	8
Ouembatenga	9	76	8
Rima	63	347	5 to 6
Tougo	69	937	13 to 14
Lébenga	4	40	10
Danaoua	22	229	10
Rasoumdé	27	189	7
Mangoulouma	2	28	14
Rikéba	52	545	10 to 11
Totals	353	3, 285	9 to 10

596 /234/ The kind of family found in the cantons of Ratenga and
592 Tougo is quite similar in type to the family among the Mossi of
182 Ouagadougou, or in its common types (3) which are characterized by

3. See my Noir du Soudan, pp. 544-553.

the fact that the zaka is identified with the single household, and only the total family and the single household remain.

This leads us to note that the average Mossi family of Yatenga, as we have described it above, is more compact, more communal, more integrated than the Mossi family of Ouagadougou.

182 This results, I believe, from the fact that the primitive element
563 of the population, the Foulsé (the basic element, let us not forget,
592 at Ouagadougou as well as in Yatenga), who are more communal than
596 the Mossi, are still much more numerous in Yatenga than in the Ouagadougou region. While in the latter area the Foulsé blended almost completely with the mass of invaders, in Yatenga they resisted more successfully, did not blend with them, and continued to make up the greater part of the population. In view of these circumstances, they probably exercised considerable influence on the morphology of the Mossi family, just as they gave it their prejudices against the ownership of cattle, etc.

This high proportion of the primitive communal element no doubt caused the structural differences between the Mossi family of the Ouagadougou region and that of Yatenga.

000 Women and the household.—We shall deal now with women and the household. We shall subdivide this section into a number of headings as follows.

1. Promise of marriage.
2. Persons whose consent is required to validate the promise of marriage.
3. Gifts.
4. Celebration and consummation of marriage.
5. Impediments to marriage.
6. Question of virginity.
7. Rights and duties of the husband and wife.
8. Polygamy.
9. Organization of the polygamous household.
10. Women's tasks.
11. The conjugal duty.

727 Only the sons of the two warring chiefs were spared. They were returned to their families for ransom. The women were also spared and returned to their husbands in exchange for other women or livestock. If their husbands did not come and claim them, the conquerors took them as wives and not as slaves.

567 435 Let us say a few words about the price of a slave. A man was worth 40, 000 cowries; a woman, 50, 000 or 60, 000; a young man, 50, 000; a young girl, 80, 000. We can see that the qualities most valued were, on the one hand, membership in the female sex and, on the other hand, youth.

567 4. Name. A slave is called yemba in Mossi (pl., yembésé) when no distinction is made between the sexes. When a male slave is meant, /265/ the word yembraogo is used (yembraodo or yembrâdo in the plural). For a female slave, one uses yempoka (yempokosé in the plural).

5. Kinds of slaves. The yembraogo, once bought or captured, was placed in irons, or to put it more precisely, irons were fastened to his feet in order to prevent him from escaping, but leaving him free to work. These irons were left on him for two or three years. When it was certain that he would not run away, the irons were removed. He spent all his time working for his master during the cultivating season, or he worked the small private fields belonging to his master's wives. In return, he was clothed and fed at all times. He could be resold, and this was done if there was dissatisfaction with him or his work.

If the master was satisfied with him, he bought him a wife. Then the slave became a bingo man, a "bingo," and was no longer a yembraogo. He passed from the status of a captive by trade or war to that of a house slave. Bingo is the name given to house slaves among the Mossi of Yatenga. At Ouagadougou they are called daparé or deporé (poré or paré meaning "back"); the daparé or daporé is the man who walks behind his master, the attendant, the slave. The bingo could not be resold except in unusual circumstances, such as when he committed fornication with his master's wife.

● [592] When the master had but a few of them, the bingo lived in the same compound, with a door of their own leading outside. When there was a number of them, they had a small compound next to the one of the family.

During the season of cultivation, the bingo worked for his master two days out of three. During the dry season, he also worked for him

566 gone into Mossi hands. The bagaré did not till the soil. They simply minded their master's herds. As for other work, they also built the straw huts where the Moro Naba of Yatenga, the Riziam Naba, and other chiefs slept at the New Year (we shall see under "Religion" /not translated/ to what purpose).

The bagaré saw to their own support (food and clothing). The multiplying herd belonged to the naba, but its yield (milk and butter) went to the bagaré. Out of this yield, however, they gave the naba whatever he needed of milk and butter.

567 In short, we can see that among the Mossi and Foulsé there exist, or rather existed, the two kinds of slaves known throughout the /French/ Sudan, the trade slaves and the house slaves, the former being salable and the latter a part of the family. Nowadays, as a result of the prohibition against their purchase and sale, there remains but a dwindling number of house slaves.

421 Now we come to family property and its transmission.

596 Family property, properly so-called. —There is no family property among our Mossi, since no work is done in common by the whole family. The family property is limited to family charms owned by the boudoukasaman.

423 Property of the compound, or subfamily property. —This does not
592 exist either, for the same reason, except for the compound itself which is the communal property of the zaka group. While each household has huts of its own, these huts are a usufructuary possession which is in accordance with the full ownership of the zaka group. Now, if some household chief wishes to build a new hut, he notifies the zakasoba, who, incidentally, always grants permission. Once the hut is built, the builder may destroy it if he wishes, which goes to prove that he has full ownership over it, having made it. He cannot, however, destroy the hut where he lives which he did not build as it actually belongs to the zaka. In short, there may be in the compound a mixture of communal property (belonging to the zaka) and individual property (hut built by a household or by an individual, millet granary erected in the same circumstances, etc.), but the communal property prevails by far.

423 Property of the work group. —Here, communal property is impor-
571 tant. /268/ It is from the group fields that the group derives most of its sustenance (seven months out of twelve). The work implements

423 also belong to the group, as we shall see later. The group, however,
571 owns neither slaves nor livestock.

421 Household property. —As we know, during the rainy or cultivating
571 season, the husband works two days out of three for his work group.
592 The third day is his. On that day he works in his small field, helped by his wife or wives. During the dry season, the husband does not work for the group but for himself alone, except for repair work on the compound huts.

571 The household is provided with food by the work group seven months
592 out of twelve and is fed with the produce of its own field for five months.

592 The primary possession of the household, therefore, is its private
423 field.

The field belonging to the household of the head of the work group is marked by a special characteristic. Since the head of the group is busy at all times with the communal field, even on the third day, his small plot is cultivated exclusively by his wives (and by his slaves, if he has any). Hence, his food is procured by his wives five months out of twelve. This only applies, however, to the heads of work groups (as well as zaka and family heads who are necessarily heads of work groups also).

423 Individual property. —Mossi women have tiny cultivated patches
562 which are wholly theirs, which do not belong to the work group or to
422 the household and which they work after five o'clock in the evening whenever possible. This is private property. Clothing, women's jewelry, etc., are also individually owned.

The husband and children also own private property. Actually,
423 the better to distinguish between individual and communal property (whether belonging to the household, the work group, the compound, or the family), we shall review below each type of property in turn.

Fields. —The fields belong primarily to the work group. (They belong only exceptionally to the compound, when it is so small that there is only one work group.) In addition to the fields of the work group, there is the household field. Finally, beside the household field, there are the private plots, for example, the little patches of the women and young men.

422 Work implements. —These tools (daba, axes, etc.) belong to the
571 work group. To work their small fields (both household and private), men and women use the daba of their work group, but if they damage

422 591 them, they must repair them at their own expense. Those implements which are worn out are replaced by the head of the work group.

Domestic animals. —Chickens, goats, sheep, donkeys, etc., are 422 231 all fully owned on an individual basis and not by the group or even by the household. The animal is owned by the man or woman who bought /269/ it. Nevertheless, all the goats and sheep in a compound are gathered together, they sleep in the same place, and they are led to the bush in a flock by the little boys of the compound. The animals of the total family or of the village, on the other hand, are never gathered together.

562 Wives. —I need not emphasize that wives are obviously private property. There are no wives owned in common by the village, the family, the compound, or the work group. The wife, however, is in some measure considered to belong to the compound or even to the family in the sense that a man's wives always go to his brother when he dies.

423 592 The compound. —We saw earlier what applies here. The compound belongs to the zakasoba, but only as a representative of the zaka, as a manager of the property of this subfamilial group. It does not belong to him as private property, in the Roman sense of jus utendi et abutendi /right of use and abuse/. It belongs, ultimately, to the zaka itself.

If this is so, it is not less true that those habitable portions of the zaka, the cabins or huts, are definitely allocated to specific households which have rights of usufruct over them. Thus, the ownership belongs to the zaka, as represented by its head. The usufruct belongs to the households or individuals.

Finally, we may note, as we did earlier, that a hut built exclusively by a household with its own labor or by a single individual of the zaka may be torn down and destroyed by him since it is household or private property set up on subfamilial property. This case, however, is quite exceptional.

The large cabins or huts for millet belong to the cultivating groups. There are also huts for millet belonging to the household, where the husband stores the harvest from the household field. Finally, the 422 large earthen vases, the jars which stand in the huts, lead us from the compound to the subject of furniture. These jars are made by the women and belong individually to specific women.

Furniture. —The furniture, which we shall study in greater detail under "Mode of Subsistence" /not translated/, is very scanty and crude. It is owned privately.

422 Household utensils. —The large earthen slabs set up to crush the
415 grain belong to the compound, but the rectangular granitic stones set into the slabs are owned by individual women, as are the movable pestles used to pound grain on the stones.

422 The wooden mortars and pestles, which are very useful and, be-
412 sides, are heavy, cumbersome, and difficult to destroy, belong to the
592 compound and sometimes to the head of the work group, in other
571 words, to the group itself. In fact, the head of the work group provides part of these implements when the ones purchased by the zakasoba are insufficient.

422 As for the canari, the largest, which are like small vats and may
415 be as high as one or one and a half meters, are used to hold the dolo
592 /270/ made by the women. They belong to the compound, and they are bought by the compound head. The ordinary canari (25 to 30 centimeters high and used to fetch water or to cook) belong privately to each woman of the compound. The same applies to gourds. The women often buy their canari or gourds with their husband's cowries, but the object, once bought, belongs to them.

422 Clothing. —Clothes are owned fully on a private basis, no matter what their origin. Thus, the skirt cloth bought by the husband for his wife belongs to her.

Ornaments and jewelry. —These are also owned privately, no matter what their origin. Hence, they belong to each man, each woman, each child.

Weapons. —They are likewise owned privately.

Amulets, charms. —The case is the same as for weapons. If, however, we use the word "charm" in its broadest sense, as any object pertaining to the cult, there are family charms which are owned by the family.

Cowries, metal coins, etc. —These are likewise private property.

421 In short, property belonging to the total family is practically nonexistent among the Mossi of Yatenga. There is subfamilial (compound) property and the property of that economic section of the subfamily which is called a work group. In addition to this communal property, there are household property and strictly private property.

428 Now let us deal with the transmission of property or inheritance.
596 Transmission of the property of the total family. —Since such property does not exist, it is not transmitted, except the family charms. The status of family head, however, is transmitted. When a family head dies, it is the oldest remaining man of the family (sometimes his brother, sometimes his cousin, etc.) who takes command of the family.

428 Transmission of the compound and its property. —When the head of
592 a compound dies, it is the oldest man in the compound (brother, cousin, etc.) who takes command of it. At the same time he takes over the management of the property communally owned by the whole compound.

428 Transmission of the property of the work group. —When the head of
571 a work group dies, it is likewise the oldest man in the group (usually the younger brother of the deceased) who assumes leadership and the management of the group's property (fields, work implements, etc.)

Let us note that in all these transmissions, when there are no longer any men of the same generation, then the sons of all the brothers, cousins, etc., are chosen, beginning with the eldest. That is to say, when one generation is exhausted, the next generation is tapped.

428 Transmission of household property. —When a married Mossi who has /271/ children dies, his eldest brother (born of the same father and mother or only of the same father) receives the inheritance. He does not take everything, however. He is expected to share, up to a point, with the other brothers (born of the same father and mother or only of the same father) and with the sons if they are old enough.

The oldest brother takes the huts and the field. The wives, on the other hand, are divided among the brothers and even among the sons if the latter are grown. If the wives are not numerous, the oldest brother does not get any more of them than the other sharers. The livestock is divided among the same people, but this time the largest share goes not to the brother who is unqualifiedly the oldest, but to the oldest brother born of the same father and mother. The cowries, coins, movable property, and jewelry are divided in the same manner. Weapons are apportioned, but the largest share goes to the brother who is unqualifiedly the oldest. The latter takes the dead man's bow and quiver, while dividing the arrows among the brothers and sons without bypassing himself.

As we can see, sharing does take place and is actually quite a complex matter, since it is sometimes the eldest of all the brothers

11: Skinner E-5 (1955-1957) 1964
FA28 Mossi FA28

marauding animals. Just twenty years ago, the six villages that lay closest to the river were gradually abandoned and their populations absorbed by other villages. As of 1955, three of these populations were still paying allegiance to their former chiefs—a fact that bears out the Mossi axiom that chiefs govern people rather than land. The three other chiefs had lost control over their followers, who had placed themselves under the protection of the chiefs of their host villages. On occasion, Nobere also lost villages to other districts. One such village, Rissoma, was taken away from Nobere and given to Djiba when one of the Nobere district chiefs had a dispute with the Mogho Naba.

The hub or center of Nobere district, like that of all Mossi districts, was Nab'tenga (also called Nobere Naba Tenga, or Na-tenga), the village of the district chief. This village was rather large and in many respects a replica in miniature of the capital of Ouagadougou. Like most Mossi villages, Nab'tenga was divided into sections, quarters, or neighborhoods called *saghse* (sing. *saka*), which included a number of compounds (*yiya*, sing. *yiri*; or *zughse*, sing. *zuka*). The district chief's compound was called Nab'yiri. He lived there surrounded by his wives, unmarried daughters, younger children, and pages. His older male children lived in separate compounds within the same saka. The saghse of Nab'tenga included Ouidi, the saka of the Ouidi Naba; Balbalse, the saka of the Baloum Naba; Tansoba, the saka of the local war minister (Tansoba or Tampsobo); Baglere, the saka of the chief's serfs; Bendere, the saka of the chief's musicians; Ouedrange, the saka of the chief's grooms; and Pwese, the saka of the guardians of the chief's wives. Scattered among them were the saghse of noble families, smiths, the Moslem Imam, and other persons. The most important market place in the district was located about four hundred yards from the chief's compound.

The number and types of social and ethnic groups within the district and its villages reflected Nobere's history. When the French arrived, the district chief was Kaglere, a descendant of Ngado, who was a son of Mogho Naba Sagha I (ca. 1787–1803). Ngado had been sent to Nobere at the end of the eighteenth century to replace Naba Peka (a descendant of Naba Biligo), who had been deposed and killed by Mogho Naba Sagha during a civil war. The other chiefly descendants of Biligo, however, were not deposed by Ngado; they remained in charge of all but five or six of the major villages in the district. The chiefs of such villages as Ronse, Barkago, Tewarka, and Pinse are *yagense* (descendants) of Naba Biligo. The village called Passintenga was ruled by the descendants of a Busanga from Lenga called Passentre, who allegedly had been given a wife by Biligo. It is not

12:Skinner E-4,5 (1955-1957) 1962
FA28 Mossi FA28

[p. 237]

CHAPTER 9

Trade and Markets Among the Mossi People

BY ELLIOTT P. SKINNER

The Mossi represent the dominant population of the Voltaic Republic, numbering about 1,600,000 out of some 3,200,000 inhabitants. They represent the unique example of a group which has preserved its ethnic identity and political autonomy through all the vicissitudes of Sudanic history until it was conquered by the French in 1896. Tradition records that the people who became the Mossi left the Dagomba region in present-day Ghana during the eleventh century and moved into the bend of the Niger River, carving out three large kingdoms and smaller principalities in the process. At the head of these still extant kingdoms are rulers *(Moro Nabas)* who formerly held feudal-like control over the provinces, districts and villages which comprise their domains. The villages, with their patri-local, polygynous, extended family households, formed the basic Mossi settlement pattern. A complex hierarchical administrative apparatus carried the power of the Mossi rulers into the smallest villages, and funneled taxes and tribute back to them. This structure still exists, but of course it has been modified by the French.

The Mossi were and are still divided into stratified royal, noble and commoner patrilineages. Characteristic of this lineage system is a process by which royal sub-lineages descend serially until they merge with the mass of commoner lineages. Below the lineages there once were large non-Mossi groups of serfs and slaves, but these people have now been grouped into lineages and have become Mossicized.

The topography of Mossi country is typical of the Sudanic grasslands. It is an immense plain, some 1,500 feet above sea level and broken only by three low mountain ranges and numerous small hills. The annual total rainfall is between 30 and 40 inches, and falls almost entirely as heavy showers or thundershowers during the period from June to September. So narrow is the margin of rainfall for successful crop cultivation that any variation in the cycle results in low crop yields and a difficult "hungry period" the following year before the new crops are harvested. The Mossi do not practice irrigation, and would have trouble doing so because the three Volta Rivers which drain their territory serve as drainage chiefly during the rainy season. Only the Black Volta has water all year round; the